Mt. Culmen Clarion

A Newsletter of Mt. Culmen EC Church

*"What I tell you in the dark, say in the light;
and what you hear whispered, shout from the rooftops!"*

Volume 6 - Issue 7 - July 2023

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Lay Delegate
Rebekah Brown

Alternate Lay Delegate
Kenneth Bannon

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Floyd Mast

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Delrea Ream

Board Secretary
Sharon Mast

Church Treasurer
Esther Stauffer

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Ian Pammer

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Joyce Garber
Kim Sweigart
Brenna Pammer

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Sharon Mast
Delrea Ream

Remember Who You Are

– Rev. Jonathan Brown

In our ongoing study of the Book of Numbers, for the past few months we've been stuck in one of the most pivotal and disturbing episodes in Israel's time in the desert. They've been on the verge of crossing over into the promised land, seizing their inheritance, and enjoying the fuller victory and blessing that their God wanted to give them. But first they sent twelve scouts to 'spy out' the land. When ten of those scouts brought back a bad report, they whipped all Israel into a full-scale rebellion, in which they essentially voted, for all intents and purposes, to reject the LORD as God over them. It was... bad.

As a result, the LORD revoked his offer of the promised land for that whole generation, and sentenced them to live and die as nomads in the desert until the exodus was forty years in the rear-view mirror. A couple months ago, we got to see Israel's reaction to the new situation: instead of following God's new direction, they tried desperately to take the promised land by force, with no success. Now, in chapter 15, we see God's reaction to the new situation, as he mops up the mess left behind by a rebellious generation.

First, as we read last month, God gives a bunch of new sacrificial rules which are going to come into force for the *next* generation, once they inherit what this generation chose to forfeit. As part of these, God gives commands for how Israel's sins are to be handled whenever again they – either as individuals, or as a community – fail to keep *"all these commandments that the LORD has spoken to Moses, all that the LORD has commanded you by Moses, from the day that the LORD gave commandment, and onward throughout your generations"* (Numbers 15:22-24). This is enduring, all-encompassing stuff.

And although this builds on what God already revealed in Leviticus 4-5, we find here that there are different *ways* to sin. Someone could sin 'unintentionally,' by mistake, in which case the sacrificial system can handle it pretty easily. Or someone could sin 'with a high hand,' in a public act of defiance against God. We have a tendency to assume "all sin is equal." But the Bible doesn't say that. There's a difference between an archer missing the bullseye by hitting the outer rim of the target, versus missing the bullseye by shooting the arrow off into space, versus missing the bullseye by spinning around and shooting at the archery instructor! And so the Apostle John clarifies that *"while all wrongdoing is sin,"* yet *"there is sin that does not lead to death"* and also *"there is sin that leads to death"* (1 John 5:16-17). Here in Numbers 15, those who 'sin with a high hand' are excommunicated from Israel's assembly somehow. Whether they could be brought back with repentance isn't quite as clear as we might wish.

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Mount Culmen Evangelical Congregational Church
1885 Turkey Hill Road, East Earl, PA 17519
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00 AM

Board Meeting Notes (June 2023)

Last month, the Official Board of Mt. Culmen Evangelical Congregational Church convened its meeting after the worship service on Sunday, June 4, 2023, to conduct the business of the church. In attendance at the meeting were 11 of the 13 members of our church board: Floyd Mast, Sharon Mast, Del Ream, Barry Ream, Kim Sweigart, Esther Stauffer, Joyce Garber, Dave Rissler, Ken Bannon, Rev. Jonathan Brown, and Rebekah Brown.

Opening with prayer and roll call, the board heard the customary reports.
Of these, the treasurer's report submitted by Esther Stauffer noted:

- May 2023 income of $4,473.50
- May 2023 expenses of $3,655.13
- a May 31 ending balance of $11,944.47

The secretary's report was accepted unanimously on the motion of Kim Sweigart, seconded by Esther Stauffer.
The treasurer's report was accepted unanimously on the motion of Del Ream, seconded by Kim Sweigart.

The stewards reported that they had changed some of the framed photographs in the fellowship hall.

The trustees had a number of items to report. First, in the week to follow the board meeting, the trustees would be sure to install a sample light in the fellowship hall, to test its appearance and effect. (*N.B.: Not only did this happen, but after review by the trustees and others, all the fellowship hall lights have been replaced.*)

Second, with respect to the prospect of selling some church land, the results of consultations with several realtors were announced. After examining the topography of the land in question – a nice wooded property without a steep incline – one suggested the property's value at between $135,000 and $150,000, depending on who assumes certain associated costs. Another realtor said that no offer less than $100,000 should even be considered. (As one trustee put it, "I wouldn't sell it for less than that.") Taking these figures into consideration, Floyd Mast said that he would continue work on the proposal and consult with the prospective buyer to see what terms would be acceptable. After that, we would proceed from there. (*N.B.: Following that, a special board meeting was held – see next page.*)

Under the heading of old business, the board began by considering the stained-glass windows. Esther and Dave had met with Carol Moore, of Moore Custom Art Glass of Honey Brook, at our church property for inspection of our stained-glass windows. Three of them were identified as being in particularly poor shape, but Carol Moore's assessment was that each and every window needed at least some attention. However, due to factors in Carol's own life, she would need someone else – someone from the church – to do the portions of work that involve standing on a ladder. Her estimate of the cost of the project was $40/hour, and she said that the three windows in worst condition could be expected to cost about $400 each, roughly. Further, the project ought not be delayed, as warmer weather is the proper time of year for dealing with stained-glass window repair and replacement.

After discussion, Pastor Jonathan introduced a motion to approve work on the project, and furthermore to assign Ian Pammer responsibility for heading it up on our end and coordinating with Carol Moore. This motion was seconded by Barry Ream, and approved unanimously by the board. (It was further noted, for informational purposes, that the proper way to clean stained-glass windows, to prevent damage, is with a soft cloth and water, but no soap.)

As a second item of old business, the board turned its attention to the then-upcoming soup sale and yard sale event. Esther reported that Yvonne had yet to receive responses from any sellers from our prior yard sale, except those who are also affiliated with the church. Esther resolved to run a small ad in the *Pennysaver* and its parallels. Pastor Jonathan reported that he had created a Facebook event and had paid to have it promoted to the local community within a 12- or 13-mile radius, and that furthermore he had advertised our event to FM 90.3 WJTL. Rebekah Brown inquired about prices for some of the additional food items, and the board confirmed that sandwiches would be $3/ea and hot dogs $2/ea, bottled water would be $1/ea, and chips would remain at their previous price.

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Esther Stauffer noted the importance of having signs for the event. Pastor Jonathan volunteered to get some custom signs made, on the condition that we could guarantee a consistent date for the event in the future, e.g., "third Saturday in June." The board was uncertain about committing Yvonne Styer to a specific date in advance, however. (*N.B.: We instead adapted some older signage for this time.*) Esther also noted that she had already gotten a number of multi-quart pre-orders for soup, and expected there to be more.

Under the heading of new business, the board took up several items of new business. First, as Esther Stauffer noted, Father's Day was coming up on Sunday, June 18, 2023. She reported that she proposed to bake a half-dozen cookies for each of the men of the congregation to take with them. Barry Ream motioned the approval of this gesture, Kim Sweigart seconded it, and it passed unanimously.

Second, Pastor Jonathan informed the board that the next Holy Communion service would be on Sunday, July 9. As one of the stewards is required to set up the elements, Pastor Jonathan requested that the task fall to Brenna Pammer, our newest steward, who has not yet had the opportunity. Joyce Garber volunteered to guide her.

Third, the question came up of when to hold the next fellowship meal, since the second-quarter had been skipped. It was determined, after consulting everyone's schedules, that Sunday, July 30, would be a suitable choice. Setting it for that date was motioned by Rebekah Brown, seconded by Ken Bannon, and passed unanimously by the board.

Fourth, the subject of our annual picnic / auction event came up, and it was confirmed that the board had previously scheduled this for Saturday, August 19, 2023. Esther Stauffer stated how happy she was that we had already booked a music group for that day: Mountain Gospel Harmony Ministries. Rebekah Brown suggested that she prepare and send a letter to local businesses, soliciting donations for the auction. The board agreed by consensus.

During the course of the meeting, as a non-business item, board members also remarked on how wonderful it was to have Madelynne and Savannah Walker back in our midst for a while, and to have Madelynne playing piano for us again, even if only for a bit. (*N.B.: Thanks also to Savannah for playing – with a broken arm, no less – during our service on Sunday, June 25!*)

There being no further business after that, on motion of Barry Ream, as seconded by Dave Rissler, the board adjourned its meeting. It reconvened in special session three weeks later (*on which, see below*).

Special Board Meeting Notes (June 2023)

The Official Board of Mt. Culmen Evangelical Congregational Church reconvened in a special session prior to the worship service on Sunday, June 25, 2023, at the call of Pastor Jonathan Brown and Board President Floyd Mast, for the stated purpose of hearing a petition from the trustees to call a special congregational meeting. In attendance at this special board meeting were all thirteen members of the Official Board: Floyd Mast, Sharon Mast, Dave Rissler, Barry Ream, Del Ream, Esther Stauffer, Ken Bannon, Joyce Garber, Rev. Jonathan Brown, Rebekah Brown, Brenna Pammer, Ian Pammer, and Kim Sweigart.

The trustees reported to the Official Board that they had developed a proposal regarding the sale of one acre of land owned by the church. Furthermore, this proposal had proven amenable to the prospective buyer. However, the bylaws of our church (Art. VI, Sec. 2.c.2) authorize the trustees to sell church-owned real estate only at the instruction of the whole congregation. For this reason, a special congregational meeting would be required to give approval to the trustees' sale proposal. On motion of Del Ream, as seconded by Dave Rissler, followed by a unanimous vote of approval, the board scheduled a special congregational meeting for **Sunday, July 9, 2023**, during the latter portion of the worship service, following the celebration of Holy Communion.

There being no further business tasked to the board in its special session, on motion of Barry Ream, as seconded by Dave Rissler, the board adjourned its meeting, to reconvene following the worship service on Sunday, July 9, 2023.

After a trustee meeting on Wednesday, June 14, 2023, our trustees lent their muscle to removing the cast-iron stove, which sold at last year's auction, from the fellowship hall!

Statistical Report (May 2023)

	Worship Service Attendance		Offerings Received
05/07/23	35		$985.50
05/14/23	30		$1,630.00
05/21/23	27		$1,043.00
05/28/23	20		$815.00
	Average: 28	Total:	$4,473.50

Birthdays (July 2023)	Anniversaries (July 2023)
7/11 – Jacob Karol (Ken and Yvonne Styer's grandson)	7/11 – Ian and Brenna Pammer

(Continued from Page 1, "Remembering Who You Are")

I wish we had more space this month to dig into these mysteries of excommunication, atonement, sacrifice, and more – or the somewhat intimidating anecdote that follows about a public execution of a defiant Sabbath-breaker, who intends (probably out of spite) to violate the sabbath in multiple ways, both by gathering sticks and then by lighting a cooking fire in public view (Numbers 15:32). Sabbath was a representation of the LORD's kingship over creation, and of his special ownership of Israel. So, given Israel's vulnerable situation after such a big rebellion, there can be no tolerance for risking a relapse – so all Israel has to take part in stamping it out at the root (15:33-36).

But I want to focus on what might seem like the last in a weird potpourri bowl of curiosities: the final instruction, about how to make clothing for the Israelites (15:37-41). That probably strikes you as sort of out of place, maybe a bit anti-climactic, doesn't it? Who cares about fringes on the hems of robes? But in the ancient world, the hem of a robe was a major status symbol of identity and authority. We've found ancient clay tablets where the impression of the tassels of a person's robe hem are used like fingerprints or signatures. The style of your hem could mark you out for who you are – which is why it was a big deal in 1 Samuel 24 when David sliced the hem off of a sleeping King Saul's cloak. If God's about to unload a rule about Israelites' hems, it could have profound implications.

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Upcoming Church Events

- **Communion Service** – Sunday, **July 9**, 2023, will be our third-quarter communion service, an opportunity for a deep personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Pastor Jonathan will celebrate the Eucharist and distribute Holy Communion via the ministry of the stewards. "On the Lord's Day, gather together to break bread and give thanks, first confessing your failings so that your sacrifice may be pure; nobody who is in conflict with his companion should gather with you until they are reconciled, so that your sacrifice is not defiled" (*Didache* 14.1-2). Please come spiritually prepared: *"Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup"* (1 Corinthians 11:28).
- **Special Congregational Meeting** – Also on Sunday, **July 9**, 2023, after Holy Communion, we will have a special congregational meeting during our worship service. The trustees have been exploring a request from a neighbor to purchase one acre of our church-owned woodland north of the church building. Through hard work and discussions, the trustees have worked out a proposal that seems agreeable to all parties. But only our congregation as a whole can authorize the trustees to sell church-owned real estate. At this meeting, all members of the church will have an opportunity to hear the details of the proposal, ask questions, and vote.
- **Fellowship Meal** – That's right, on Sunday, **July 30**, 2023, following our worship service, we'll have our third-quarter potluck meal in the fellowship hall! Bring some food to share if you like, or just bring your appetite. Let's look forward to having lunch together and sharing life in the Lord!

Upcoming Community Events

- **Music in the Grove** – On Sunday evenings in June, July, and August, St. John Center Lutheran Church (599 Reading Road, East Earl) hosts free concerts in their grove from 6:00pm to 8:00pm, with light refreshments available for purchase. Bring a lawn chair! Selections for this month include Ironwood Drive (July 2), Horst Brothers (July 9), Sunnyside (July 16), the Mike Hertzog Trio (July 23), and Chestnut Ridge (July 30).
- **New Holland Concert Band and Fireworks** – On Tuesday, **July 4** (or July 5, in case of bad weather), 2023, celebrate Independence Day by coming to see the New Holland Concert Band play at the New Holland Memorial Community Park (400 East Jackson Street, New Holland) from 7:00pm to 9:00pm, to be followed at 9:30pm by a grand display of fireworks.
- **New Holland Summer Arts Program** – Throughout July, New Holland Memorial Community Park will also host a series of other free concerts, 7:00pm to 9:00pm.
  - Saturday, July 8 – 3-Hour Tour, playing soft rock from the '70s and '80s
  - Sunday, July 9 – Swing Street, playing swing music
  - Wednesday, July 12 – Charlie Zahm, playing Celtic and folk music
  - Saturday, July 15 – The Nomads, playing rock-and-roll from the '50s
  - Sunday, July 16 – Bobby Law and the Late Show, playing country and country-rock music
  - Wednesday, July 19 – Robbie Lawrence and the Steelworkers Polka Band
  - Saturday, July 22 – Twin Rose Community Band
  - Sunday, July 23 – Nathan Merovich, playing country music
  - Wednesday, July 26 – The Fabulous Greaseband, playing oldies rock-and-roll
  - Saturday, July 29 – Cosair Blue/Jazz Orchestra, playing blues, jazz, and swing music
  - Sunday, July 30 – Across the Tracks, playing bluegrass music
- **Terre Hill Days** – Coming up on Thursday, **July 13**, through Sunday, **July 16**, 2023, the Terre Hill Park (210 Lancaster Avenue, Terre Hill) will host the annual Terre Hill Days festival! With food, games, and rides opening at 5:00pm on weeknights and all day on Saturday, there will also be a Friday evening car cruise at 6:00pm and select entertainment each night: the Nomads on Thursday at 7:00pm, the Jess Zimmerman Band on Friday at 6:30pm, Saved Renegade on Saturday at 11:00am, Dutchyfunk on Saturday at 2:00pm, and the Josh Squared Band on Saturday at 6:30pm. And that's not even mentioning the bingo each day at 6:00pm, or Saturday's arts and crafts fair, air acrobatics (3:30pm), tug of war (4:30pm), or fireworks (10:00pm)!
- **This Old Train** – On Saturday, **July 22**, 2023, from 2:00pm to 3:00pm, the LVSingers (from Lighthouse Vocational Services) will put on a free music program at the Eastern Lancaster County Library (11 Chestnut Drive, New Holland), with the otherarching theme of the train's importance to Pennsylvania.

Mt. Culmen Soup Sale and Yard Sale

We want to thank everyone so much for supporting our yard sale and soup sale event on Saturday, June 17, 2023! Here at Mt. Culmen, in the pavilion and the fellowship hall, we rented space and tables to a number of sellers...

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...all while we sold sandwiches, hot dogs, baked goods, and soup from the fellowship hall kitchen.

Thanks to your gracious and generous support, we raised $1,577.59 for our church!

(Continued from 4, "Remembering Who You Are")

So what the LORD tells Israel through Moses is, each Israelite should *"make tassels on the hems of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each hem"* (Numbers 15:38). That's not an easy task, because the kind of blue-purple dye they'll need is made from a kind of local snail. The snails are plentiful enough, but thousands of shells have to be crushed up to get even a gram of the dye. As a result, this sort of dye was always a very expensive thing, and so full garments made in this color were reserved for the highest-status people of all, like kings. This was used to dye some of the yarn used for the screen over the gate to the tabernacle's court (Exodus 27:16), and for the tabernacle's ten outer curtains (Exodus 26:1), and for the inner veil that marked out the Holy of Holies (Exodus 26:31-33). Whenever the tabernacle and its contents had to be moved, some of the holiest items – including the Ark of the Covenant – were veiled in cloth this color (Numbers 4:5-12). Aaron the high priest wore vestments that relied heavily on this thread, with his holiest robe being *entirely* dyed this very color (Exodus 28:31), whose hem featured gold bells and colorful fruit-like ornaments made of this thread (Exodus 28:33-34).

Why does the LORD want each Israelite to have a bit of this incredible finery on themselves in daily life? To remind them of something. *"It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, to do them, not to spy after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after"* (Numbers 15:39). Earlier, in judging Israel, God objected that they had 'spied out the land' with their eyes and had committed 'harlotry' (Numbers 14:33-34). Here, he acknowledges that this is Israel's natural inclination, just as it is for every people on the earth: to 'spy out' and commit 'harlotry' in whatever direction our heart and eyes take us. We're a visual creature.

So God here, in mopping up the mess, hijacks that visual impulse, the same one that results in the sick spiritual ruin of idolatry. When they find themselves again facing stimulations of the eyes, temptations of the heart, what can they now do? They can look at their hems – and say, "Wait, *this* is who I am. There's in me a trace of the same high call that marks out the high priest, the golden altar, the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant." That's the point: *"So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the LORD your God!"* (Numbers 15:40-41). And suddenly, in that light, all these harsh laws and standards make sense: Israel shouldn't sin *because they're better than this*. They're set apart, and these tassels remind each Israelite who wears them that they're linked to the same holy system – a source, not just of esteem, honor, and rights (though that too!), but of profound responsibilities before the God of their salvation.

We may not wear literal blue tassels, though maybe some of us wear a cross necklace or some other visual item. But this lesson goes for us, too: *"As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct"* (1 Peter 1:15).

Featured Hymn: "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Prose Translation by John Mason Neale (1849)

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and stand with fear and trembling, and ponder nothing earthly in itself; for the King of Kings and LORD of Lords, CHRIST our GOD, cometh forward to be sacrificed and to be given for food to the faithful; and He is preceded by the choirs of the Angels, with every Domination and Power, the many-eyed Cherubim, and the six-winged Seraphim, that cover their faces, and vociferate the hymn, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Poetic Adaptation by Gerard Moultrie (1864)

1. Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,
For with Blessing in His Hand,
CHRIST our GOD to earth descendeth,
Our full homage to demand.

2. King of Kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth he stood,
LORD of Lords, in Human Vesture –
In the BODY and the BLOOD –
He will give to all the Faithful
His Own SELF for Heavenly Food.

3. Rank on rank the Host of Heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of Light descendeth
From the realms of endless day,
That the Powers of Hell may vanish
As the darkness clears away.

4. At His Feet the six-winged Seraph:
Cherubim with sleepless eye
Veil their faces to the Presence,
As with ceaseless Voice they cry –
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Alleluia, LORD most High!

Prose translation taken from J. M. Neale, ed., *The Liturgies of S. Mark, S. James, S. Clement, S. Chrysostom, S. Basil* (J. T. Hayes, 1859), 39-40.

Poetic adaptation taken from Orby Shiply, *Lyra Eucharistica*, 2nd ed. (Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1864), 133.

Appears in our hymnal *The Singing Church* as hymn #114.

Commentary by Pastor Jonathan

Of all the hymns in our hymnal, this one has a claim on being the oldest of them all. And it's in the wrong spot.

The hymn we have printed as "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" is included in our hymnals as a Christmas hymn. But it isn't about Christmas at all, really. It only got misfiled there because someone got confused about the real subject. This is a Communion hymn.

Specifically, a pre-Communion hymn. It's a translation of a portion of a very early church service format known as the Liturgy of St. James. The Liturgy of St. James is derived from the worship of the very first Christians in Jerusalem, who were led by James (whom the Bible calls 'the brother of the Lord'). Over time, the ways in which the Jerusalem Christians worshipped developed, but it was always a highly structured sort of event, not the simple and casual style we might imagine today.

In the version we know, the Liturgy of St. James likely dates back to at least the fourth century, though parts – such as what our hymn is based on – must be from the third century or earlier. Just think: the first people to sing this hymn were as close to the first Easter as we are today to the Declaration of Independence being signed!

The basic shape of the Liturgy of St. James matches the way we know the earliest generations of Christians held their services of worship toward God. After some work of preparation (prayers, incense, an entrance), the priest proclaimed Christ's peace to the people. There followed readings from different parts of the Bible, intercessory prayers, more blessings of God, and then the dismissal of anybody who wasn't fully a Christian yet.

After another offering of incense, there'd be a 'cherubic hymn' (*cherubikon*), and that's where our hymn fits into the Liturgy of St. James. This was while bread and wine were brought forward to the altar, after which prayers of offering were said, a blessing was pronounced, the creed was recited, a kiss of peace was exchanged, there'd be prayers for the whole world, a pre-communion prayer, a dialogue between priest and people, leading up to 'This is my body,' 'This is my blood,' and a prayer to call forth the Holy Spirit. After more prayers for the church and everyone reciting the Lord's Prayer, only then would anyone receive Communion – after which, following yet more singing and praying, people would be dismissed.

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The Liturgy of St. James, in its developed form, can last for a couple hours – it's not for wimps! It's a serious act of worship, and one that might remind you a lot of the Book of Revelation – which makes sense, since Revelation both shows the way first-century Christians worshipped and was also a great inspiration for later Christians on how to worship God on earth as the angels do in heaven. And one dominant theme in early Christian worship, especially in the Liturgy of St. James, is that what Christians do on earth is meant to be what angels do in heaven, and that human and angel are uniting in a single great act of worship every time the liturgy is celebrated.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Rev. John Mason Neale (1818-1866), an Anglican priest – we've met him in these pages before! – published a book in 1859 in which he took a bunch of the different liturgies he found in the early church and translated them into English. The Liturgy of St. James was one of them, and Rev. Neale believed it "may claim the first place for value among all the primitive liturgies" in the Church. As part of that, naturally he had to give an English version of the 'cherubic hymn' he found the priest saying there.

One of Rev. Neale's contemporaries was another Anglican priest by the name of Gerard Moultrie (1829-1885). Son of an accomplished hymn writer (John Moultrie, 1779-1874) and grandnephew of South Carolina Governor William Moultrie (1730-1805), he studied at Oxford, where he earned his bachelor's degree in 1851 and his master's degree in 1856. But even while a student there, he had already begun to busy himself in writing and publishing hymns.

Gerard Moultrie became a friend of John Neale's, and the two were collaborating together by the early 1860s. In the year 1862, Moultrie contributed an essay to one of Neale's books, in which Moultrie made the suggestion that the Liturgy of St. James was even older than the letters of the Apostle Paul!

Given the close association between Neale and Moultrie, and their shared passions for church history and for music, it's no surprise that if Moultrie wanted to try his hand at taking pieces of the Liturgy of St. James and turning them into English music, he'd rely on the work Neale had already done. Neale's stated purpose in translating the church's "primitive liturgies" was to further "the propagation among us of the Primitive Faith regarding the Holy Eucharist" – that is, to learn to see the central act of Christian worship in the same light that the early Christians did. So, after Orby Shipley published a collection of old and new hymns about the Eucharist, including some translated by Neale, in Shipley's 1863 *Lyra Eucharistica*, Moultrie contributed his version of this ancient 'Great Cherubic Hymn' for the second edition, which came out in 1864.

Just like the *cherubikon* from which it comes, the first verse of this hymn begins with the phrase "Let all mortal flesh keep silence, / and with fear and trembling stand." The first line is inspired by two Old Testament verses: Habakkuk 2:20 (*"But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him"*) and Zechariah 2:13 (*"Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation"*). The second line probably draws most on Psalm 2:11 (*"Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling"*). Unlike so many of our more modern hymns that emphasize God's approachability and familiarity, this hymn opens with a sense of God's tremendous majesty and holiness. He is God; we are his servants, standing in absolute awe of him, the True Beauty.

And so, when God is on the move, we should "ponder nothing earthly-minded." This is lifted almost directly from Paul's words in Colossians 3:2 (*"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth"*) and on his criticism in Philippians 3:19 of those *"who mind earthly things."* It dovetails well, too, with the ancient liturgical command to 'lift up your hearts,' to which Christians everywhere responded, 'We have them to the Lord' – that is, our hearts are focused on heavenly realities, not on merely earthly ones. The overall sense here is that, at this moment when we are singing this hymn, we are aiming to unite ourselves to heavenly worship, to be in awe before the presence of the God who is so vastly more impressive and imposing than all the earth put together, that he commands our full attention.

But why *now* do we ponder nothing earthly minded? Because now, "with blessing in his hand, / Christ our God to earth descendeth, / our full homage to demand." It's easy to see why we commonly misread this as a Christmas song – when else did Christ descend to earth? But the very here is present-tense: Christ *is* descending to earth, now, as we worship, as we welcome his presence at the altar.

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(Continued from Page 9, "Featured Hymn")

This is maybe a different picture of what happens before Communion than we're used to. Here, we sing, "Christ our God" is actually returning to earth, in a very special way, in a prefigurement of his Second Coming. This holy God is approaching our midst, demanding "our full homage," our complete and total respect. In most modern music, we shy away from so bluntly admitting that our 'Jesus meek and mild' makes demands on us. But he does. Just as God said to Job three times, *"I will demand of thee"* (Job 38:3; 40:7; 42:4), so Jesus told his disciples: *"Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you"* (John 15:14). Jesus demands the honor he deserves.

But he comes also "with blessing in his hand." When Jesus ascended bodily into heaven, *"he lifted up his hands, and blessed [the disciples]"* (Luke 24:50). And so in no way does he return to his disciples, *ever*, without blessing in his hands. In so doing, he shows himself to be our True High Priest, just as when the first high priest Aaron finished making his offerings, *"Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them"* (Leviticus 9:22). In every time the Church faithfully celebrates the Eucharist, in order to receive Holy Communion, Jesus is actually coming near – the Holy God, standing up in his holy temple, demanding full homage from his worshippers, but blessing us more surely than any high priest of old ever did. Is that what we expect at Communion? Or do we expect less?

The second verse opens with a description of Jesus as a paradox: on the one hand, he's "King of Kings," while on the other hand, he's "born of Mary." Ever since the incarnation, "Christ our God" has been *both* God ("King of Kings") *and* man ("born of Mary"). This, again, is a reason why we might mistake this for a Christmas hymn – when else do we remember that Christ was born of Mary? (For the early church, *all the time*, not just once a year.) But the hymn is using Christmas as an *analogy*. Just like Jesus once stood on earth as both God and man – "Lord of Lords," but "in human vesture" – so now he comes again, with both divinity and humanity disguised from our view. We can't *see* God, can't even *see* man, as we look at what's on the altar. And yet, we confess, it's "the body" and "the blood."

For *"the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"* (1 Corinthians 10:16). And *"whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord"* (1 Corinthians 11:27). Paul obviously took this very seriously. And if the Bible does, maybe we should, too. Because in this sacred ritual, what happens is pretty startling, according to this hymn – so startling that some people used to just delete this verse when they sang the rest, thinking they could hide from its high theology. What happens here is that, "in the body and the blood" that are proclaimed to be on the altar, Christ "will give to all the faithful / his own self for heavenly food."

That's radical! To all who are faithful, to all who will worthily receive, Christ *gives himself as food* – not an ordinary kind of food, but "heavenly food." Just as Israel in the desert *"did all eat the same spiritual meat"* (1 Corinthians 10:3), so the Christian faithful likewise all eat the same heavenly food. Jesus said, quite plainly: *"I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. ... Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you"* (John 6:51-53). In Communion, Jesus gives us his own self as heavenly food.

This is a very intense vision of what we eat and drink when we participate in Communion. It's not just bread, it's not just wine. In the truest way, it's Jesus' own self. And there's nothing holier, nothing more precious, nothing greater and mightier, that he could possibly give us. That's why it's better than manna in the wilderness. It's better than the wine be made from water at Cana. It's a better miracle than loaves and fishes to feed five thousand. It's Jesus' self!

But remember, this was always meant as a pre-Communion hymn, one happening before the consecration, while the bread and the wine – still materially just ordinary bread and ordinary wine, though sanctified in being gifts to God – were being carried forward to the altar. It's a hymn of anticipation, as the movement on earth (a procession toward the altar) mirrors a movement in heaven. And so in the third verse, our attention is called to that movement above, as "rank on rank, the host of heaven / spreads its vanguard on the way." One after another, the various ranks of angel in heaven above fly as an honor guard. The actions of those carrying the bread and wine to the altar are matched to, correlated with, the flight of the angels! Oh, if only we took more thought to how our worship on earth was geared toward the worship life of heaven – then indeed we might "with fear and trembling stand!"

(Continued on Page 11)

(Continued from Page 10, "Featured Hymn")

This verse reminds us also *why* the angels are going forth as an escort. Whom are they escorting? "The Light of Light," Jesus Christ, the Holy God who shines forth from God his Father. And this Light begotten by Light – where is he going? He "descendeth / from the realms of endless day" – a beautiful description of heaven's brightness. Just as we celebrate on Christmas, so also again each time the Eucharist is celebrated, the Light descends out of heaven's realms of endless day to our day-and-night earth, coming to our world, coming to bring blessing.

And what blessing this time? So "that the powers of hell may vanish / as the darkness clears away." And if we hear this as a Christmas hymn, that would make sense, sure: When Jesus was born, the Light dawned on those dwelling in darkness (Isaiah 9:1-6), and the early Christians often said that the powers of the demons began to fail at the moment Jesus was born on earth. But this is not a Christmas hymn. For us, even when the Eucharist is celebrated in July, the full power of Christmas is brought to bear all over again. For us, when Christ descends to our altar, the Light has come forth from heaven, surrounded by his angels, to do battle with the powers of hell. The Light has come to shine in the darkness. And when we worthily welcome him through our mouths and into our bodies and souls, the grace of God is ready to break down strongholds, fortify his holy temple within, and conquer the devil and his terrors! If life is spiritual warfare (and it is), then here is a heavenly ministry of deliverance, through the body and the blood.

In our hymn's final verse, we catch a glimpse of heavenly worship – on earth. In the Bible's last book, we spy the four 'living creatures' and twenty-four 'elders' as they *"fell down before the Lamb"* (Revelation 5:8-9), and millions of angels as they chant how the Lamb is worthy (Revelation 5:11-12). Can we think that, if heaven and earth overlap at a sacrament, the angels do less? So here around our altar, when Christ our God is there, "at his feet the six-winged seraph" and the "cherubim with sleepless eye" are worshipping. The portrayal of seraphim comes especially from Isaiah 6, as Isaiah peers behind the worship in the Jerusalem Temple to see the LORD on his throne, filling the whole temple with just the hem of his robe, as the six-winged seraphim fly around and shake the whole temple with their voice of praise (Isaiah 6:1-4). The portrayal of cherubim here comes especially from the Book of Ezekiel, where the prophet sees *"four living creatures"* whose spirits dwell in wheels *"full of eyes round about them"* (Ezekiel 1:5, 18). Christians have always agreed that seraphim and cherubim are the highest ranks of heavenly creatures ('angels').

But here, what are the seraphim and cherubim doing? Terrifying us? No! They're at the feet of Jesus as he stands at the altar, and – like the seraphim of Isaiah 6 – they "veil their faces to the Presence." When Christians look at what's on the altar, all their eyes can see is bread and wine. Jesus communicates himself to us in a hidden way. But angels don't get that benefit. So they veil their faces, because *even they* can't look straight at the face of God. Which means they can't look straight at what Jesus is *giving to us to eat*. The highest angels are not worthy to fully see what Jesus hands to you and says, "Take and eat," "Take and drink," and which you put in your mouth and chew and swallow.

So the seraphim and cherubim have to hide their faces. But, as they do, they don't stop their worship. Just as we see in Isaiah 6, they cry out "with ceaseless voice." There, the chant was *"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory!"* (Isaiah 6:3). Here, for poetry and brevity, it's turned into hallelujahs: "Alleluia, alleluia, / alleluia, Lord most High!" The sense is the same: this is Christ our God, this is the Lord Most High, this is the Presence of the Almighty, this is the One *"worthy... to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!"* (Revelation 5:12), worthy of heaven and earth's uninterrupted, undistracted praises. So no wonder we should ponder nothing earthly-minded, no wonder all mortal flesh should just keep silence and be reverent and awe-filled, speechlessly astonished at the approach of God himself in such a tangible way to our midst!

This is the picture which this hymn – and the very ancient *cherubikon* it came from – paints of the Eucharist, which we receive in Holy Communion. To some of us, maybe it's more of a casual thing, a mere symbol, a religious action to get done and over with as efficiently as possible. But not to the Christians who've been singing this for nearly two thousand years. To them, this is a moment of heaven and earth overlapping, of being caught up into the worship of seraphim and cherubim, of having our God mysteriously appear in our very midst, of glimpsing the final victory over his Light over all darkness and all hell, and of finally *"tasting the heavenly gift,"* upon which the most tremendous angels fear to look, with our own tongues (Hebrews 6:4). Whether we believe these Christians or not – well, that's up to each of us, in our hearts, to resolve with God. But as you prepare for our next Communion service, what kind of difference would it make if you really believed that these words we sing are what's going to happen?

Preaching Calendar (July – August 2023)

Worship services commence at 10:00 AM on Sundays. We hope to see you there with us!

July 2 (Pentecost 5):
Sermon Title: "Sky and Sea and Soil"
Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:1-10
"Formless and Void Creation Stood" (insert)
"Eternal Wisdom, Thee We Praise" (insert)

July 9 (Pentecost 6):
(Communion Sunday)
Sermon Title: "Communion for the Cosmos"
Scripture Reading: John 1:9; 3:21; 6:32-33, 48-51
"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" (114)
"For the Beauty of the Earth" (insert)

July 16 (Pentecost 7):
Sermon Title: "God and His Great Green Thumb"
Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:8-13
"God from His Cloudy Cistern Pours" (insert)
"Arise All Things That God Has Made" (insert – vv. 1-3, 8)

July 23 (Pentecost 8):
Sermon Title: "All These Shining Orbs"
Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:14-19
"The Spacious Firmament on High" (46)
"Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore Him" (4)

July 30 (Pentecost 9):
Sermon Title: "The Life Aquatic"
Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:20-23
"God of the Seas, Thy Thund'ring Voice" (insert)
"The Pious Fisherman's Hymn" (insert)

August 6 (Pentecost 10):
Sermon Title: "The Birds Their Carols Raise"
Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:20-23
"All Things Bright and Beautiful" (42)
"This is My Father's World" (50)

August 13 (Pentecost 11):
Sermon Title: "All Creatures Great and Small"
Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:24-25
"Vast Are Thy Works, Almighty Lord" (insert)
"All Creatures of Our God and King" (43)

August 20 (Pentecost 12):
Sermon Title: "Six, Seven, Rest"
Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:1—2:4
"Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above" (5)
"O Day of Rest and Gladness" (526)

August 27 (Pentecost 13):
Pastor Jonathan will be on vacation from August 21-29.
Barry Heckman will be guest preacher. More information to follow.
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (74)
"Christ is Coming! Let Creation" (169)

September 3 (Pentecost 14):
Sermon Title: "Dust of Earth, Wind of Heaven"
Scripture Reading: Genesis 2:4-7
"O Worship the King, All Glorious Above" (17)
"Lord, What Was Man When Made at First" (insert)

Quotes for Thought

"If the world is a harmonious instrument rhythmically moved, I worship not the instrument but the One who tuned and strikes the strings and sings to its accompaniment the melodious strain."

– St. Athenagoras of Athens

Legatio 16.3 (c. AD 177), in *Athenagoras: Legatio and De Resurrectione* (Oxford University Press, 1972), 33

"Christ commanded that throughout the whole world, in which there is one Church, both his seeds and the foreign ones should grow. After this common growth will come the day of judgment, which is the harvest of souls. Sitting as judge will be the Son of God, who knows what is his and what is foreign. It will be for him to choose what he stores in the barn and what he hands over to the fire … Let us all acknowledge that we are human; let no one arrogate to himself the power of the Divine Judge. … Let it be enough for a human if he is not guilty of a sin of his own, rather than that he should desire to be the judge of another."

– St. Optatus of Milevis

Against the Donatists 7.3 (c. AD 385), in *Translated Texts for Historians* 27:138-139

"My Lord, the world is inadequate to profess your grace, and your infinite compassion is greater than creation. The heavens and the earth, along with the angels and humanity, are insufficient to glorify you because of your love. … Your good favors cannot be repaid by your creations, because your good will itself exceeds all repayment. While all creatures ceaselessly praise you, they are also indebted to you..."

– St. Jacob of Serugh

Homily 63.1-4, 7-10 (c. AD 500), in *Texts from Christian Late Antiquity* 74:8

"The sacrament of the body of Christ, as much as it looks to the Lord Christ himself who was immolated upon the cross, is his flesh... and is his blood … The flesh and blood, by which the mercy of God is besought for our sins, nourishes us daily. … The flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is both eaten and drunk by the mouth of the body and the mouth of the heart..."

– St. Lanfranc of Bec

On the Body and Blood of the Lord 14, 17 (c. AD 1062), in *Fathers of the Church: Medieval Continuation* 10:56, 64

"Why do [we] honor what [the cross] signifies, symbolizes, and represents? … First, because it is the sign of the Christians that distinguishes them from nonbelievers. Second, because we use it as a protective guard and a powerful sign against evil spirits and antagonistic powers. Third, because upon it Christ sacrificed himself for us as an acceptable sacrifice through which the mercy, power, and wisdom of our God was revealed, which he used to save the world from the hand of the devil, his soldiers, and his authority over people, which he gained through lies and deception. Fourth, because it reminds us of God's benevolence and grace towards us."

– Jurji, a monk of Aleppo

Dispute of Jurji the Monk §17 (AD 1216), in *Texts from Christian Late Antiquity* 69:208-210

"I have often wondered at the absurdity of those men who glory in the name of 'patriot'... and yet make it their business to ridicule religion and weaken its obligations. … Can that man be reckoned a genuine lover of his country, who endeavors to promote vice and corrupt the morals of the people? … The religious worship of a people, especially the public part of it, will always have a considerable influence on their morals; and this influence will be good or bad according to the nature of their worship. … The more our views of the divine perfections are enlarged, the more intensely will the pure flame of divine love burn in our hearts; and if it be true that love assimilates to the object beloved, the more we love, the more we will resemble the deity."

– Thomas Reese

An Essay on the Influence of Religion in Civil Society (Markland & McIver, 1788), 32, 35-36

"The men who led the American Revolution and drafted the Constitution may not have been punctilious about specific tenets of Christian orthodoxy, but virtually to a man they were convinced that God had a hand in this 'new order of the ages' called America and hoped that they were doing it according to his will. … Hardly anyone in America wanted religion to be totally divorced from the state."

– George McKenna

The Puritan Origins of American Patriotism (Yale University Press, 2007), 46-47

PRAYER GUIDE

- ***We praise God*** **for all the wondrous blessings he's given us, most notably the ministry of his Son (in death, resurrection, and exaltation to the Father's right hand) and the gift of his Holy Spirit; and** ***we pray*** **that God would glorify his name above all else and would bring his kingdom more fully to earth.**
- *We pray for* **our denomination, our congregation, and the church universal**, that God would bless us at all levels with faithfulness, wisdom, vision, and fortitude to earnestly labor in his vineyard.
  - *We pray particularly for* our pastor **Rev. Jonathan J. Brown** and for **our church board**.
  - *We pray also for* **our Evangelical Congregational Church leadership**: our bishop **Randy Sizemore**, executive director **Kevin Henry**, and district field director **Keith Miller**; the **Global Ministries Community** under **Ted Rathman**; the **Kingdom Extension Community** under **Mike Snedeker**; the **Church Health Community** under **Gary Kuehner**; the **Missional Alignment Community** under **Bishop Randy Sizemore**; and the **Ministerial Development Community** under **Matthew Hill**.
- *We pray for* **our missionary partners** (such as **Dan Quigley** and others), that God would keep them safe and faithful, would focus their efforts on God's work, and would grant success in accordance with his holy will.
- *We pray for* **other churches and pastors in our community**, that God would keep all congregations united in one holy faith and devoted to the ardent service of one and the same kingdom and of its King, Jesus.
- *We pray for* the **salvation of our whole community and its maturation in Christian discipleship**, knowing that there is hope in Jesus for all people and for entire communities to reflect the righteous love of God.
- *We pray for* **an end to coronavirus** and to **other current disease outbreaks** (e.g., mpox, cholera, RSV).
- *We pray for* **an easing to the economic suffering around the world**, especially due to the inflation surge.
- *We pray for* **those suffering in the wake of disasters around the world**, that God would have mercy:
  - *We pray for* those afflicted by natural disasters such as the Asian heatwave; famine; drought; wildfires in Kazakhstan and especially in Canada; storms in India, Pakistan, and Brazil; tornadoes in South Africa, Texas, and Wyoming; the tidal bore in Canada; flooding in Haiti, Ukraine, Samoa, South Africa, Nepal, Iran; landslides in Tajikistan, China; earthquakes in Haiti, Myanmar, India, France, Ecuador; etc.
  - *We pray for* those afflicted by accidents such as boat accidents in Haiti, Nigeria, Greece, Spain, and the Philippines; bus/truck crashes in Italy, Bangladesh, Australia, Mali, Canada, Egypt, India, South Korea, Kenya; train crashes in India and Tunisia; plane crashes in Mississippi, Virginia, and Arizona; building collapses in Pakistan and Egypt; bridge collapses in India, Montana, and Philadelphia; fires in Italy, Germany, Egypt, Switzerland, Indonesia; explosions in Turkey, Philippines, France, and China; alcohol poisoning in Iran; the roller coaster crash in Sweden; the stampede in Pakistan; the *Titan* implosion; etc.
- *We pray also for* **those victimized by violence and social ills**, especially the Russian invasion of Ukraine, that the God of all comfort would make his presence manifest to the injured, traumatized, and grieving.
  - *We pray additionally for* those afflicted by the Uyghur genocide in China; ongoing warfare in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, and Central African Republic; Israel-Palestine, India-Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan, and Armenia-Azerbaijan conflicts; insurgency in Egypt, Colombia, Chad, Cameroon, Congo, the Maghreb, Nigeria, Niger, India, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Mozambique, Pakistan, South Sudan, Turkey, Myanmar, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, and Libya; gang/cartel wars in Mexico, Haiti, Ecuador; kidnappings in Mexico, Uganda, Nigeria, etc.; protest-related violence in Senegal and Angola; riots in France; mass shootings in Mexico, South Africa, Somalia, Sweden, Vietnam, Japan, Honduras, Moldova, the West Bank, Virginia, Colorado, Washington, and Illinois; stabbings in Sweden, France, England, and Canada; bombings in Afghanistan (including at a mosque); rocket attacks in Ukraine and Sudan; the vehicle-ramming attack in England; attacks on schools in Afghanistan and Uganda; attacks on camps in Congo and the West Bank; attacks on churches, especially in India; the prison riot in Honduras; the American opioid epidemic; human rights violations (e.g., abortion and human trafficking); and the refugee crisis.
- *We pray for* all who serve and protect us, including **civic leaders**, **police**, **firefighters**, **medical responders**, and **members of the military**: May God keep them safe, just, wise, sincere, humble, and accountable as they administer justice, guard against chaos, prevent harm, and defend the vulnerable.
- *We pray for* **our nation and its government** at all levels and in all branches, that God would move our leaders to repent of unjust or unmerciful practices and laws; that God would crown them with wisdom, security, peace, and civility toward all; and that God would give them godly hearts to live and govern rightly.

PRAYER GUIDE (*Continued*)

- *We pray for* **the persecutors and maligners of the church around the world**:
  - *We pray for* the conversion of terrorists and other people of violence into disciples of the Prince of Peace.
  - *We pray for* the wisdom of God to be made manifest to skeptics and critics.
  - *We pray for* the Spirit's boldness to fill the hearts of all believers to witness to Jesus in life and in death.
- *We pray for* **the families and friends of many who have entered their rest in the past year**, including:
  - For the family of **Timothy Lingg** (Tory's brother), who entered rest on June 28, 2022.
  - For the family of **Janet Martin** (John Eberly's niece), who entered rest on July 27, 2022.
  - For the family of **Shirley Jacobs** (Ken Bannon's cousin), who entered rest on August 10, 2022.
  - For the family of **George Hilton Jr.** (Stephanie Bills' brother), who entered rest on August 11, 2022.
  - For the family of **Marian Rissler** (Dave's sister-in-law), who entered rest on September 1, 2022.
  - For the family of **Linda Kohl** (Clair's wife, Del's sister-in-law), who entered rest on September 3, 2022.
  - For the family of **Erma Martin** (Shirley Good's friend), who entered rest on September 24, 2022.
  - For the family of **Sharon Brubaker** (Skip's cousin/Grace's niece), who entered rest September 24, 2022.
  - For the family of **Norbert Sedelbauer** (Ruth Snader's uncle), who entered rest on October 5, 2022.
  - For the family of **Bonnie Mogle** (Anita Boley's neighbor), who entered rest on October 9, 2022.
  - For the family of **Jean Adams** (Sharon Horst's mother), who entered rest on October 14, 2022.
  - For the family of **Gary Sedelbauer** (Ruth Snader's cousin), who entered rest on October 26, 2022.
  - For the family of **Roy Sweigart** (Kim's father-in-law), who entered rest on November 16, 2022.
  - For the family of **Ginger Goudie** (the Hesses' friend Jim's wife), who entered rest November 28, 2022.
  - For the family of **Patricia Dietz** (Bob Dietz's wife), who entered rest on December 3, 2022.
  - For the family of **Bob Dietz**, who entered rest on December 4, 2022.
  - For the family of **Earl Pickel**, who entered rest on December 19, 2022.
  - For the family of **David Hurst**, who entered rest on December 22, 2022.
  - For the family of **Letty Clark**, who entered rest on December 25, 2022.
  - For the family of **Bob Forrey**, who entered rest on January 5, 2023.
  - For the family of **Paul Bauman** (Joyce Good's brother), who entered rest on January 6, 2023.
  - For the family of **June Harter** (Sue Eshelman's mother), who entered rest on January 24, 2023.
  - For the family of **Darlene Young**, who entered rest on February 1, 2023.
  - For the family of **Mike Diem**, who entered rest on February 8, 2023.
  - For the family of **Alvin Wise** (Jean Hess' uncle), who entered rest on February 22, 2023.
  - For the family of **Grace Sprecher** (Sharon Mast's aunt), who entered rest on February 22, 2023.
  - For the family of **Herman Martin**, who entered rest on February 25, 2023.
  - For the family of **Leon Hartranft**, who entered rest on March 11, 2023.
  - For the family of **Amanda Hoffert**, who entered rest on March 11, 2023.
  - For the family of **Lois Gift**, who entered rest on March 20, 2023.
  - For the family of **William Riegel** (Del's brother-in-law), who entered rest on March 27, 2023.
  - For the family of **Darryl Imler** (Leroy Stoltzfus' nephew), who entered rest on April 1, 2023.
  - For the family of **Glenn Weber**, who entered rest on April 4, 2023.
  - For the family of **Clarence Jones** (Floyd Mast's uncle), who entered rest on April 11, 2023.
  - For the family of **Linda Wonder** (Sharon Mast's stepmother), who entered rest on April 27, 2023.
  - For the family of **John Herr** (Abby Eberly's friend), who entered rest on April 29, 2023.
  - For the family of **Sherry Stoltzfus** (Esther's sister-in-law's mother), who entered rest on May 4, 2023.
  - For the family of **Jim Brubaker**, who entered rest on May 5, 2023.
  - For the family of **Clarence Bauman** (Joyce Good's brother), who entered rest on June 17, 2023.
    - May the Lord give immeasurable peace, strength, and comfort to all who face loss and grief.
- *We pray for* **all dementia sufferers** and for **their caretakers**, that God would lighten burdens, restore clarity to injured minds, and speak directly to hearts and souls with his comfort, his peace, and the light of grace.

PRAYER GUIDE (*Continued*)

- *We pray for* **all those suffering from cancer** – (including Randy Vandill, Cindy Ebersole, Donna and Brandy Rhodes [Cindy Ruth's sister-in-law and nephew], Troy Frey, Lisa Mast, Lori Zimmerman, Pat Street [Nancy Mountz's sister], Betty Kennedy [Del Ream's niece-in-law], Adrianne Hedges [Brenna Pammer's friend], Earl Martin [Miriam Rissler's brother-in-law], Doris Snader, Rev. Marlin Lafferty, Rev. Don Wert, etc.) – that God would shield them from pain, restore their bodies, comfort them, and bless their doctors.
- *We pray for* the **other assorted health concerns (and other needs)** of:
  - Ray, Delores, and Ruth Snader + Bobby Snader (Bob and Ruth's son) + Carol Briggs (Ruth's sister)
  - John Good (Earl's brother) + David Good + Dave Embry Jr. (Shirley Good's niece's husband)
  - Floyd Mast + Steven Mast (Floyd's son) + Cindy Bannon + Marilyn Wilson (Cindy's mother)
  - Delores Jaxel + Clair Kohl + Jeff Kohl + Henry Kohl + Shawn and Candace Sweigart
  - Earl and Pauline Good + Jen Swanson (Earl and Pauline's granddaughter)
  - Cherri Snader + Lawrence Groff + Jim Becker + Don Pickle + Dot Yohn
  - Mary Andrews + Raymond Bannon + Emma Shirk (Ken Bannon's aunt)
  - Debbie Diem (Sharon Mast's sister) + Tom Schwer (Sharon's stepbrother)
  - Barty Messner + Shannon Messner + Shirley Riggins (Deb Messner's mother)
  - Josh Kendig (Sharon Mast's son) + Connie Dieter (Leon and Jean Hess's daughter)
  - Abby Eberly + Linda Sweitzer (Abby's friend) + Lindsy Ringler (Abby's granddaughter)
  - Larsen Houck (Shirley Good's great-grandson) + Kayley Smith (the Hesses' granddaughter)
  - Kathryn Shirk (Jean Hess's aunt) + Sonya Shirey (Jean's friend)
  - Veanna Baxter + Julia Reed (Veanna's sister) + Shirley Buchanan
  - Ray Arment + Mary Skiba (Sally's cousin) + Emily Sensenig
  - Ken Styer + Lucy Weber + Bret Hoffert + Jethro Hursh
  - Jeremy Kurman + Warren Weinhold + Jody Freeman
  - Jess Pennepacker + Charles Yingst + Ralph Mountz
  - Carl and Grace Nolt + Vera Kochel + Carl Martin
  - Floyd Heuyard + Dennis Wanner
  - Robert and Barbara Sparr + Rodger Whittaker
  - Elizabeth Zimmerman (John Eberly's sister)
  - Dorothy Long (Sharon Mast's boss's sister)
  - Violet Stauffer + Paul Ford
  - Jerry Felpel and Doris Getz
  - Dawn Acevedo (Cindy Hoffer's sister)
  - Savannah Walker + Ben + Minerva Hufford
  - Troy Frey and both of his parents + Tory Lingg
  - Ken Keen and Nancy Fox (Floyd Mast's friends)
  - Donna Sensenig + Larry Sensenig + Daryll Sensenig
  - Matthew Huntington (Brenna Pammer's brother-in-law)
  - Lorraine Burkholder (Shirley Good's daughter) + Linda Burkholder
  - Linda Talbot (Cindy Ruth's sister) + Albert Rhodes (Cindy's brother)
  - Rodney Rhodes (Cindy Ruth's cousin) + Cathy Bullock (Cindy's neighbor)
  - Rebecca Lucas (the Walkers' family friend) + Rebecca Horst + Dillon Dewire
  - Barb Kern + Linda Ebert (Barb Kern's friend) + the Bowman family (Barb's cousins)
- *We pray for* **other neighbors, friends, and believers in need**, that God would heal, provide, and comfort.
- *We pray for* **a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit** upon our church, our community, our county, our nation, the Evangelical Congregational Church, and the church universal. *We pray for* the whole church to be filled with a spiritual zeal for worship, evangelism, and discipleship. **May the fires of revival fall!**
- ***We praise God* for all the prayers we've seen him answer and for his everlasting faithfulness!**